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# More than 40 per cent of Australians worked from home

Media Release

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**i** Source: [Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2021](#)

More than 40 per cent of employed people were regularly working from home during the first half of August, according to new data released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

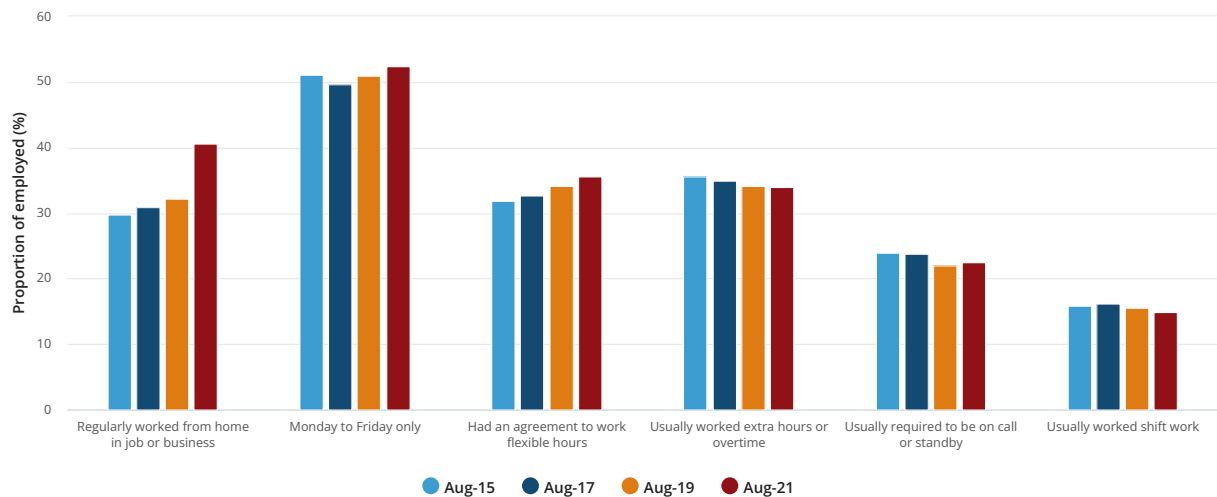
## Working from home and other arrangements

Bjorn Jarvis, Head of Labour Statistics at the ABS, said: "Prior to the pandemic, the percentage of employed people working from home on a regular basis had been steadily increasing by around a percentage point every two years. Our latest data for August 2021, as the Delta period impacts were deepening, are showing an 8.4 percentage point jump to 40.6 per cent."

Working from home continued to be more common in some occupations. Close to two-thirds (64 per cent) of managers and professionals were doing it regularly in August 2021, compared with around a quarter (25 per cent) of people across other occupations.

"Interestingly, while the pandemic has seen a large shift in people working from home, there haven't been similarly large changes in other working arrangements such as working Monday to Friday only. Working arrangements other than working from home have generally followed pre-pandemic trends," Mr. Jarvis said.

## Working arrangements



Further details can be found in [Working arrangements \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release) available on [www.abs.gov.au \(http://www.abs.gov.au/\)](http://www.abs.gov.au/).

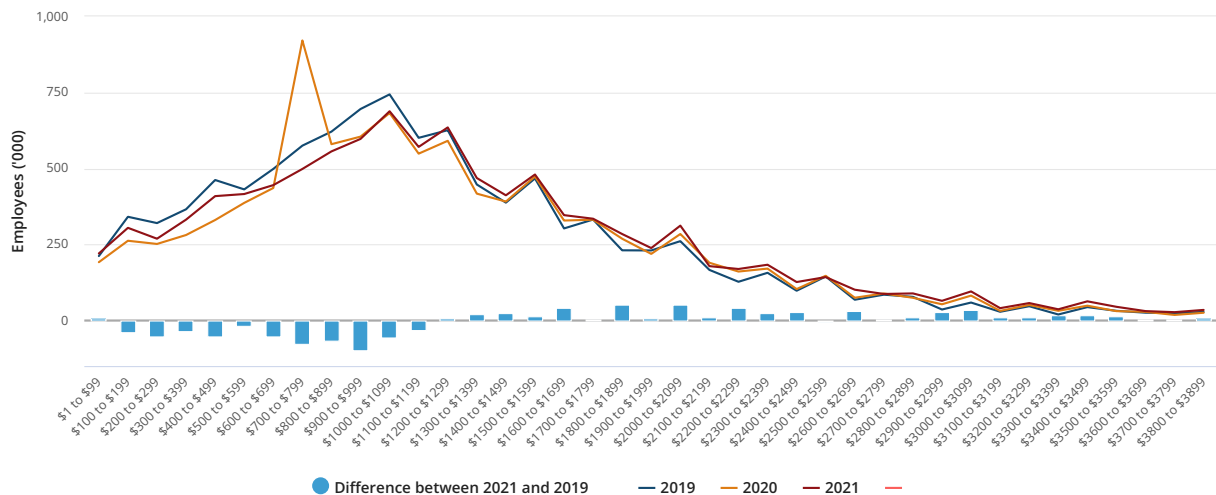
## Employee earnings

The impact of lockdowns and other restrictions were again evident in the distribution of earnings, with fewer lower paid workers in August 2021 than before the pandemic.

"In August 2021, the number of employed people who were earning less than \$1,000 per week fell by almost half a million compared to pre-pandemic levels, from 4.5 million in August 2019 to just over 4 million in 2021," Mr. Jarvis said.

"This echoes what we saw last year, in August 2020, when lower paid workers and their jobs were also particularly affected by lockdowns and other restrictions."

## Distribution of weekly earnings



Note: In August 2020, there was a larger number of people than usual earning around \$750 per week, which was the amount of the JobKeeper wage subsidy.

In contrast with the fall in the number of employees earning below \$1,000 per week, the number of employees earning \$1000 or more per week increased between August 2019 and 2021, by 8 per cent. However, this was below the two-yearly growth rates seen before the pandemic (14 per cent between August 2017 and 2019, and 10 per cent between 2015 and 2017).

Further details can be found in [Employee earnings \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/latest-release) available on [www.abs.gov.au](https://www.abs.gov.au/) (https://www.abs.gov.au/).

## Leave entitlements

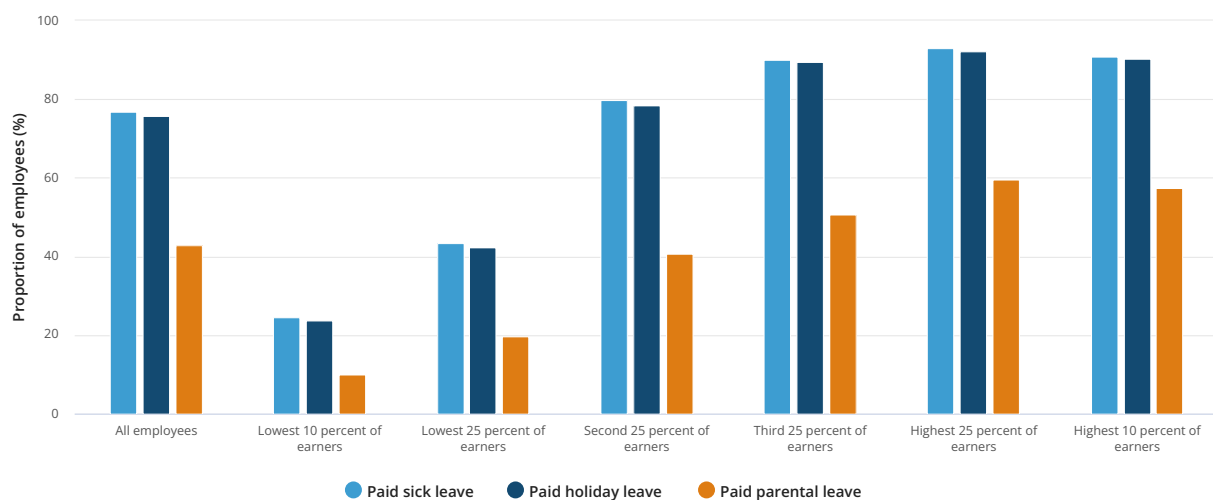
In August 2021, there were 2.4 million casual employees. This was equivalent to 22.5 per cent of all employees, down from 23.6 per cent of employees in May 2021 and 24.1 per cent in February 2020 before the pandemic. This shows the extent to which casual employment

has been impacted during the pandemic. Casual jobs are more likely to be lower paid.

“In August 2021, 90 per cent of employees who earned the median wage of \$1200 per week or more were entitled to paid sick leave or paid holiday leave. Over 50 per cent of these employees had access to paid parental leave,” Mr Jarvis said.

“For workers in the lowest 25 per cent of earners (less than \$750 per week), 40 per cent had access to paid sick leave or paid holiday leave, and 20 per cent were entitled to paid parental leave.”

## Paid leave entitlements by lower and higher paid workers



Further details can be found in [Working arrangements \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release) available on [www.abs.gov.au \(http://www.abs.gov.au/\)](http://www.abs.gov.au).

## Media notes

- Data from the Characteristics of employment survey can be found in the following pages on the ABS website:
  - [Characteristics of employment \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/characteristics-employment-australia/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/characteristics-employment-australia/latest-release)
  - [Employee earnings \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/employee-earnings/latest-release)
  - [Working arrangements \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release)
- Employees are the subset of employed people who worked for an employer and received remuneration by wage, salary or otherwise.
- Casual employees used in this release are defined as employees without leave entitlements. Other measures of casual employment are also available from [Working arrangements \(https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/earnings-and-work-hours/working-arrangements/latest-release).
- It is important to note that most casual employees can work or expect to work in their jobs for 12 months or longer. Casual employment should therefore not be assumed to be temporary employment.
- Median is a statistical term referring to the middle point of a distribution. In the case of earnings, it refers to the earnings of the person in the middle of the distribution, with the same number of people earning more and less than them. Unlike means or simple averages, medians are not skewed by very high and very low earners.
- Earnings are the pre-tax amount paid to employees for work done or time worked (including paid leave), and are a subset of employee income.
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